

**JOINT STAFF REPORT  
Fall FACT SHEET No. 3  
Columbia River Compact**

**August 22, 2003**

<p><b>Purpose:</b> To review chinook salmon and steelhead stock status and consider treaty Indian and non-Indian commercial fishing options for the mainstem Columbia River.</p>
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**MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES**

***Salmon and Steelhead***

- The Biological Opinion concerning treaty Indian and non-Indian fall season fisheries was signed by NOAA Fisheries on July 30, 2003.
- A Management Agreement for upper Columbia River fall chinook, steelhead, and coho was reached by the *U.S. v Oregon* parties for fall fisheries occurring in 2003.
- The 2003 Fall Management Agreement allocates the 31.29% URB impact rate 23.04% for treaty Indian fisheries and 8.25% for non-Indian fisheries; however, sharing impacts could change based on inseason updates.
- Treaty Indian fall fisheries will be managed to limit impacts on wild Group B index steelhead to no greater than 15%. All non-Indian fisheries outside the Snake River basin will be managed for an upriver wild steelhead impact rate to not exceed 2% on wild Group B index steelhead.
- Upriver fall chinook escapement goals include 7,000 adult fall chinook (4,000 females) to Spring Creek Hatchery and 43,500 adult fall chinook (natural and hatchery included) for spawning escapement above McNary Dam.
- Ocean and lower river fisheries will be managed to provide for Bonneville Dam escapement of at least 50% of the upriver coho salmon return.
- Non-Indian fisheries will be managed for an impact rate of less than 5% for Columbia River chum salmon.
- Based on the 2003 Incidental Take Permit issued by the OFWC, combined ocean and freshwater fisheries will be managed to limit impacts on wild coho destined for Oregon tributaries to no more than 29.2% and the freshwater fishery impacts shall not exceed 11.5% of the run entering the Columbia River.
- Non-Indian fisheries occurring during August will be managed in accordance with the "2003 Non-Indian Columbia River Fall Fishery Chinook Allocation Agreement" completed through the North of Falcon negotiation process.

***Excerpts From the 2003 Non-Indian Columbia River Fall Fishery Chinook Allocation Agreement***

- ✓ URB fall chinook impacts in fisheries downstream of the Snake River are allocated pre-season at 52% (4.29%) to the sport fishery and 48% (3.96%) to the commercial fishery. The Columbia River Compact/Joint States will use this URB impact allocation as guidance for making in-season management decisions concerning the Columbia River sport and commercial fisheries. Actual URB impacts in the fisheries may differ from pre-season estimates based on actual fishery catches, stock composition, and run-size updates. The *U. S. v. Oregon* TAC will update the URB run-size beginning in mid-September.
- ✓ Expected total catch of fall chinook in the mainstem Columbia River downstream of the Snake River, in lower Columbia River tributaries, and Select Areas is 84,300 of which 41,400 (49%) are expected to be harvested by the sport fishery and 42,500 (51%) by the commercial fishery. These catch estimates are based on pre-season abundance forecasts and fishery estimates. Actual harvest sharing will be influenced by stock specific fall chinook abundances and relative harvest rates by each respective fishery.
- ✓ The Buoy 10 sport fishery is modeled at 77% of the chinook catch estimated for a full fishery. The fishery will begin on August 1 with a two fish daily limit; only one may be a chinook. Chinook retention will continue through at least Labor Day (September 1). Beginning August 16, the daily limit will increase to three fish; only one may be a chinook. URB impacts with this fishery are projected to be 1.56%, or 36% of the total sport impact of 4.29%.
- ✓ The mainstem sport fishery below Bonneville Dam is modeled at 90% of the chinook catch estimated for a full fishery to the end of the year (with a two fish daily limit), which is expected to provide enough chinook to continue the fishery through mid-September when URB run size and fishery updates occur. URB impacts associated with this fishery are 2.28%, or 53% of the total sport impact of 4.29%.
- ✓ Expectations for the commercial fishery include:
  - An early August salmon fishery up to 4 nights (modeled dates were August 5, 7, 11, 13). Mesh size is 8-inch minimum and area is below the Longview Bridge. URB allocation for this fishery is 0.76% (19% of the total commercial impacts of 3.96%) and total chinook catch expectation is 10,400 fish. Chinook/URB impacts not used in this fishery will transfer to future commercial fisheries.
  - Late August Zone 4-5 fishery during the last two weeks of August. Fishing is expected to occur up to 3 nights per week with breaks in between fishing days. Mesh size is 9-inch minimum and area is above the I-205 Bridge. URB allocation for this fishery is 0.83% (21% of the total commercial impact of 3.96%) and total chinook catch expectation is 6,500 fish. Chinook/URB impacts not used in this fishery will transfer to September fisheries.
  - Fishing areas and days in August fisheries may change based on in-season updates.
  - Sturgeon management will be consistent with sturgeon protocol adopted at the February 6, 2003 Compact hearing.

- Based on pre-season run size forecasts and North of Falcon negotiations, the catch allocation for commercial fisheries occurring during August is 16,860 chinook, including 4,110 URB's.

***Sturgeon***

- Sturgeon fisheries between the Columbia River mouth and Bonneville Dam during 2003-2005 are guided by a Joint State Sturgeon Fishery Management Agreement adopted by the Oregon and Washington Fish and Wildlife Commissions and the Columbia River Compact.
- The Joint State Sturgeon Fishery Management Agreement sets forth an annual harvestable number of 40,000 white sturgeon and allocates the harvestable number 80% sport (32,000 fish) and 20% commercial (8,000 fish).
- Commercial fisheries will be further managed based on a protocol adopted at the February 6, 2003 Compact hearing.

***Protocol for Management of White Sturgeon in 2003-2005 Commercial Fisheries***

- ✓ Fisheries should be managed for white sturgeon catch expectations of 2,000 for the winter-summer timeframe (January-July), 2,000 for the early fall timeframe (August), and 3,600 for the late fall timeframe (September-October).
- ✓ Landings during SAFE fisheries are not to exceed 400 white sturgeon for the entire year with winter/spring/summer fisheries not to exceed 300.
- ✓ Allow some level of incidental sturgeon harvest to occur during all target salmon seasons.
- ✓ Conduct limited target sturgeon fisheries during winter and early fall timeframes if feasible.
- ✓ Conduct target sturgeon fisheries during October if necessary to access commercial allocation.
- ✓ Adopt white sturgeon possession and landing limits if necessary to remain within season specific catch expectation or to provide white sturgeon for harvest during subsequent salmon seasons.
- ✓ Until further discussion occurs with the OFWC and the WFWC regarding sturgeon allocation among individual commercial fishers, landings and possession limits will be in the form of per vessel limits and these limits will include both mainstem and Select Area fisheries.
- ✓ Joint Staff will conduct an annual post-season evaluation of white sturgeon retention with industry.

## **Water Conditions**

### ***Flow Updates***

- Flows have been below average this summer with flow measured at Bonneville Dam ranging between 133 kcfs and 199 kcfs during July. In recent years July flows have ranged between 150-300 kcfs.
- Flows remained stable during August with flows measured at Bonneville Dam ranging between 134 kcfs and 173 kcfs during the first 13 days of August. Flows during August have generally ranged between 100-200 kcfs in recent years.

### ***Temperature Updates***

- Water temperatures, as measured at Bonneville Dam, typically increase rapidly through the month of July to a peak during the first half of August. Temperatures typically decline slowly during the last half of August and early September.
- Water temperatures during the month of July measured at Bonneville Dam increased from 62°F on July 1 to 70°F July 31 as compared to recent years when temperatures ranged between 62-72°F during July.
- Water temperatures at Bonneville Dam remained stable, ranging between 69-70°F during the first 20 days of August. In recent years water temperatures during August have typically fluctuated between 68-72°F.

## STOCK STATUS

### *Fall Run Expectations*

<i>Summary of Columbia River Adult Salmon and Steelhead Returns in 2002 and Forecasts for 2003.</i>			
Species, stock	2002 Return <sup>1</sup>	2003 Forecast <sup>1</sup>	Comments
<b>Fall chinook</b>	<b>733,100</b>	<b>595,200</b>	Fifth largest since 1948
Upriver bright (URB)	276,900	258,400	Second largest since 1989
Snake River wild (SRW)	NA	NA	
Mid-Columbia bright (MCB)	106,000	86,600	Third largest on record (since 1980)
Bonneville upriver bright (BUB)	57,900	43,100	Fourth largest on record (since 1980)
Pool upriver bright (PUB)	48,100	43,500	Second largest on record (since 1985)
Lower river bright (LRB)	2,400	1,800	Formerly a component of the BUB stock
Bonneville pool hatchery (BPH)	160,800	101,900	Fourth largest since 1976
Lower river hatchery (LRH)	156,400	116,900	Second largest since 1989
Lower river wild (LRW)	24,900	23,400	Second largest since 1989
Select area bright (SAB)	5,700	6,200	Based on recent 5-year average
<b>Upriver summer steelhead</b>	<b>478,000</b>	<b>360,900</b>	Fourth largest on record (since 1938)
Skamania index (May 1 - June 30)	25,000	16,600	12,100 hatchery and 4,500 wild
A-run index (length <78cm)	323,100	279,600	209,000 hatchery and 70,600 wild
B-run index (length ≥78cm)	129,900	64,700	53,200 hatchery and 11,500 wild
<b>Coho</b>	<b>510,700</b>	<b>429,000</b>	Smallest since 1999
Early stock	278,100	271,500	Similar to 2002
Late stock	232,600	157,500	Smallest since 1999

<sup>1</sup> Columbia River mouth return, except summer steelhead is Bonneville Dam return.

### *Summer Steelhead*

- The Skamania index return of 14,200 was similar to the preseason forecast of 16,600.
- A total of 14,154 summer steelhead passed Bonneville Dam during April 1-June 30 (Skamania index) which was slightly less than the previous 5-year average return of 17,400.
- Based on sampling data at Bonneville Dam, the Skamania index return of 14,154 was comprised of 12,353 (87%) hatchery fish and 1,801 (13%) wild fish. The hatchery return was similar to the preseason forecast of 12,100 while the wild return was about 40% of the preseason forecast of 4,500.

<i>Summer Steelhead Dam Counts</i>						
		August 20	Cumulative Total Through August 20			
		Daily	2003	2002	2001	2000
Bonneville	Skamania Index	--	14,200	25,000	28,700	16,600
	Group A Index	3,847	200,700	225,500	359,000	144,600
	Group B Index	264	2,300	13,000	6,500	3,200
	Total	4,111	217,200	263,500	394,200	164,400
The Dalles		1,542	60,400	125,000	181,500	67,200
John Day		1,057	43,500	83,000	101,700	42,300
McNary		571	30,400	62,500	95,700	28,100
Ice Harbor		275	19,200	26,500	43,600	12,400
Lower Granite		144	6,300	10,500	14,300	5,600
Priest Rapids		0	6,100	8,000	12,000	4,100

- To date 28% of the steelhead passing Bonneville Dam have passed The Dalles Dam, which is 68% of the recent 10-year average of 41%.
- Passage of Group A index steelhead over Bonneville Dam typically peaks in August while Group B index steelhead abundance typically peaks in September. Based on the recent 10-year average 62% of the Group A index and 12% of the Group B index runs pass Bonneville Dam prior to August 21.
- Since July 1 summer steelhead counts at Bonneville Dam have been comprised of 99% Group A index fish and 1% Group B index fish. Based on counts through August 20 the Group A index return is tracking ahead of preseason expectations.
- Returns of wild summer steelhead have been good to date with wild fish representing 10-50% of summer steelhead passing Bonneville Dam during July 1- August 20. Group A index wild summer steelhead abundance typically peaks in late July and wild Group B index summer steelhead typically peak in early September with 75% of the wild Group A index and 19% of the wild Group B index fish passing Bonneville Dam prior to August 21.
- Sampling at Priest Rapids Dam began July 22, and through August 14 wild fish have comprised 26% of the passage over Priest Rapids Dam.

<i>Upriver Summer Steelhead Returns to Bonneville Dam</i>										
Year	Group A Index (<78 cm)					Group B Index (>=78 cm)				
	Number Wild	%	Number Hatchery	%	Total	Number Wild	%	Number Hatchery	%	Total
1984	52,500	27	143,200	73	195,700	13,800	14	84,200	86	98,000
1985	51,900	18	229,600	82	281,500	13,000	32	27,900	68	40,900
1986	56,600	20	230,900	80	287,500	10,000	16	54,000	84	64,000
1987	106,700	45	131,600	55	238,300	14,000	31	31,000	69	45,000
1988	64,300	37	108,800	63	173,100	17,700	22	63,900	78	81,600
1989	57,500	30	135,600	70	193,100	12,400	16	65,200	84	77,600
1990	27,100	23	88,500	77	115,600	8,800	19	38,400	81	47,200
1991	60,300	26	173,800	74	234,100	6,200	22	22,100	78	28,300
1992	44,300	18	197,200	82	241,500	12,700	22	44,800	78	57,500
1993	28,700	21	108,000	79	136,700	4,400	12	31,800	88	36,200
1994	21,200	18	99,800	82	121,000	5,200	19	22,300	81	27,500
1995	26,000	14	154,000	86	180,000	1,900	14	11,300	86	13,200
1996	25,700	15	148,700	85	174,400	3,900	21	14,900	79	18,800
1997	30,900	15	177,300	85	208,200	3,900	11	32,800	89	36,700
1998	34,800	26	99,900	74	134,700	3,400	9	36,900	91	40,300
1999	56,600	32	119,900	68	176,500	3,700	17	18,400	83	22,100
2000	63,600	29	153,100	71	216,700	8,400	21	32,500	79	40,900
2001	137,200	27	377,900	73	515,100	12,000	14	74,300	86	86,400
2002	87,300	27	235,800	73	323,100	32,300	25	97,600	75	129,900
<b>2003 Proj.</b>	<b>70,600</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>204,000</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>279,600</b>	<b>11,500</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>53,200</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>64,700</b>

- A return of 279,600 Group A index summer steelhead to the Columbia River would represent the third largest return since at least 1986 and a return of 64,700 Group B index summer steelhead would be the third largest return since 1989. The TAC has not updated the summer steelhead run size forecasts at this time.

### ***Fall Chinook***

- The fall chinook salmon return in 2003 is expected to be near 600,000 adults, with the forecast being comprised of 376,400 brights (63%) and 218,800 tules (37%).
- Passage over Bonneville Dam remained relatively stable during early August with daily adult counts exceeding 1,000 only once during the first 20 days of August.
- Through August 20 a total of 14,051 adult fall chinook have passed Bonneville Dam. Typically about 4% of the adult passage occurs prior to August 21.
- Observation of fall chinook passing Bonneville Dam began on August 15 to determine tule/bright stock separation and adult passage through August 20 has included 13,744 brights (98%) and 307 tules (2%). Typically 4% of the bright passage and <1% of the tule passage occurs prior to August 15.

## **FISHERY UPDATES**

### ***Early August Commercial Fishery***

- Preseason modeling projected landings of 10,350 chinook, including 1,970 URBs (19%), 1,400-2,100 white sturgeon, and <50 green sturgeon for the early August commercial fishery.
- The season consisted of four 12-hour nightly (7 PM-7 AM) fishing periods on the nights of Monday August 4, Wednesday August 6, Monday August 11, and Wednesday August 13.
- All four fishing periods occurred in all of Zones 1-3 with an 8-inch minimum mesh size restriction in effect to target chinook salmon. In accordance with the white sturgeon protocol, a 7-sturgeon per calendar week retention limit was in effect.

<b><i>Early August Season Commercial Fishery Landings</i></b>					
Date	Deliveries	Chinook	Coho	White Sturgeon	Green Sturgeon
Aug 4-5	141	847	1	670	4
Aug 6-7	101	1,146	7	278	0
Aug 11-12	162	2,605	47	895	6
Aug 13-14	146	3,512	104	300	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>8,110</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>2,143</b>	<b>10</b>

- Based on CWT data, chinook landings during the fishery were comprised of 25% brights and 75% tules. URB stock landings totaled 360 adults which is less than the preseason expectation of 1,970.

### ***Late August Commercial Fishery***

- At the August 12 hearing, the Compact adopted four 10-hour nightly (8 PM - 6 AM) fishing periods on the nights of Monday August 18, Thursday August 21, Monday August 25, and Wednesday August 27.
- All four fishing periods are scheduled to occur in the area from the I-5 Bridge upstream to Beacon Rock with a 9-inch minimum mesh size restriction in effect to target chinook salmon and minimize steelhead handle. In accordance with the white sturgeon protocol and the early August fishery, a 7-sturgeon per calendar week regulation was adopted for this fishery.

- Preseason modeling projected landings of 6,510 chinook, including 2,140 URB's (33%), and 200-400 white sturgeon for this fishery.
- Landings during the first fishing period totaled 224 chinook, 3 coho, and 85 white sturgeon.

<b>2003 Lower Columbia River Commercial White Sturgeon Catch Summary</b>		
<u>Fishery</u>	<u>Commercial Allocation = Guideline</u>	<u>Catch</u>
Mainstem Winter Gillnet	2,000	1,517
Select Area Gillnet (thru 8/21)	400	253
August Gillnet (thru 8/19)	2,000	2,228
Mainstem Late Fall Gillnet	3,600	0
	Cumulative Catch to Date =	3,998
	Quota Remaining =	4,002

### ***Select Area Commercial Fisheries***

- The first three 30-hour fishing periods of the fall season occurred in Youngs Bay from noon Wednesday August 6 to 6 PM Thursday August 7, noon Wednesday August 13 to 6 PM Thursday August 14, and noon Wednesday August 20 to 6 PM Thursday August 21.
- Fall chinook landings to date have been less than expected due to low effort. Chinook landings totaled 203 fish during the first two 30-hour fishing periods and based on LV fin clips SAB fall chinook comprised 92% of the catch.
- Due to mainstem fishing opportunities a total of two white sturgeon and zero green sturgeon were landed in Youngs Bay during the first two fall season fishing periods.

### ***Buoy 10 Sport Fishery***

- The Buoy 10 fishery (from the mouth upstream to the Tongue Point/Rocky Point line) opened August 1 for chinook, adipose fin-clipped coho, and adipose fin-clipped steelhead. Daily salmon bag limit was two fish, of which one could be a chinook through August 15 and three fish, of which one can be a chinook thereafter.
- Chinook angling has improved in recent weeks with catch rates increasing from 0.19 chinook per rod last week to 0.35 chinook per rod during the first three days of this week.
- Coho catch rates have also increased in recent weeks and have averaged 0.41 coho per rod this week.
- Through August 20 angler trips have totaled 24,600 and resulted in 5,200 chinook and 6,700 coho being kept.

### ***Mainstem Sport Fishery***

- Under permanent regulations the Columbia River opened to summer steelhead angling May 16 below the I-5 Bridge and June 16 from the I-5 Bridge to the Hwy. 395 Bridge in Pasco, Washington. A summer chinook season was opened from Tongue Point/Rock Point line upstream to Highway 395 Bridge near Pasco, Washington during June 16-July 31. Retention of adipose fin-clipped chinook and adipose fin-clipped steelhead was allowed during this fishery.

- Wild steelhead handle during July totaled 1,700 fish released which was slightly above the 10-year average but below the 2000-2002 record high release totals for July. The total for kept hatchery fish of 2,700 was also similar to the recent 10-year average, but below the catches observed during 2000-2002. During May 16-July 31, 2003 lower Columbia River salmonid anglers made 52,800 angler trips and caught 7,200 steelhead (5,000 hatchery fish kept and 2,200 wild fish released) and 3,800 summer chinook (1,900 kept and 1,900 released).
- The mainstem Columbia River (from the Tongue Point/Rocky Point line upstream to Hwy 395 Bridge at Pasco) opened for chinook and coho on August 1. Nonadipose fin-clipped coho must be released downstream from Bonneville Dam. The daily salmon bag limit is two adults per day.
- During August 1-18, ODFW and WDFW personnel checked 3,000 salmon anglers on the lower Columbia with catches of 50 fall chinook adults, 500 hatchery steelhead kept, and 250 wild steelhead released. The total adult chinook catch through August 17 is estimated to be about 250 fish.

## FISHERY PROPOSALS

### *Late August Non-Indian Salmon Fishery*

<i>Recommendation</i>	
The Joint Staff recommends modifying the area for one of the previously adopted salmon fishing periods for the mainstem Columbia River as follows:	
Season:	8 PM Monday August 25 to 6 AM Tuesday August 26 (10 hours)
Area:	The lower Zone 4 commercial fishing boundary extending from Warrior Rock on the Oregon shore to the Lewis River on the Washington shore upstream to Beacon Rock (Zone 4-5).
Sanctuaries:	Washougal and Sandy rivers.
Gear:	9" minimum and 9¾" maximum mesh size restrictions.
Allowable Sales:	Salmon and sturgeon. A maximum of seven sturgeon may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel during each calendar week (Sunday through Saturday) that the fishery is open. The seven sturgeon possession and sales limit includes only mainstem fisheries during August 17-31.
Miscellaneous Rules:	Quick Reporting Rules will be in effect for Washington buyers.

- ✓ The early August fishery catches and impacts were less than preseason expectations. URB impacts were 360 fish compared to the preseason modeled allocation of 1,970 fish, which results in an estimated 1,610 URB's remaining on the early August fishery impact expectation.
- ✓ The proposed fishery modification will allow for remaining impacts from the early August fishery to be used during the August timeframe.
- ✓ Total impacts to URB stocks are not expected to exceed the 4,110 URB impact expectation for August fisheries.
- ✓ The proposed modified fishing period will function as a full fleet test fishery to gain effort, catch, and stock information in the expanded fishing area during late August which has not occurred for several decades.



- ✓ The increased area from I-5 Bridge downstream to the lower Zone 4 boundary (Warrior Rock/Lewis River line) will open an additional 20 miles of river and will reduce congestion observed during other late August fisheries.
- ✓ Based on location of the fishery, impacts to listed tule and LRW fall chinook are expected to be negligible.

### ***Treaty Indian Commercial Fisheries***

- The tribes are expected to propose commercial fishing periods at this hearing.

### **Proposed Compact Hearing**

- The Joint Staff is recommending that a Columbia River Compact hearing be scheduled for 10 AM Friday, September 12, 2003 at the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Region 5 office, Vancouver, Washington for the purposes of updating salmon and steelhead stock status and considering treaty Indian and non-Indian commercial fishing seasons in the mainstem Columbia River.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife  
August 22, 2003